

Clarendon County Regular Council Meeting

Monday, April 8, 2019

6:00 PM

Clarendon County Council

Those in attendance:

Chairman Dwight L. Stewart, Jr.
Councilman Billy G. Richardson
Councilman Benton Blakely
Clerk to Council, Dorothy M. Levy

Vice Chairman W.J. Frierson
Councilman AC English
County Administrator, David W. Epperson

Press in attendance: The Manning Times, Johnny Weeks

Others in attendance included:

Lynden Anthony	Willie Briggs	Brad Grefin	Beulah G. Roberts	Matt Evans
Nathaniel Dyson	Julius Adger	Shirley Black-Oliver	Nannette Frye	Tim Baxley
Gregory Holliday	Larry Johnson	Robert L. China, Jr.	Thomasena Hall	David McCoy
Betty Phillips	Patricia Pringle	Linda Lemon	Tammy Rodvansky	Bucky Mock
Sonya Mellerson	And other Clarendon County Residents			

Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm with opening comments. Vice Chairman Frierson led the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Stewart stated that he has a change in the Agenda. He stated that under number 12, he wants to move Voters Registration/Election Commission up to the top of the list.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the agenda for April 8, 2019 with the change that was stated under number 12 on the agenda.

2. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Councilman English and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the council meeting minutes for the Regular Council Meeting, which was held on March 11, 2019.

3. Service Awards Recognition

Prior to the business session of the Regular Council Meeting, Chairman Stewart, Administrator Epperson, and Linda Lemon, Director of Human Resources, presented three employees with service awards. The awards were presented as listed:

- Nakia Cooper 10 Years
- Eric Weldon 10 Years
- Priscilla McCormack 20 Years

4. Presentation – Summerton Community Action Group

Rev. Robert China began his presentation by thanking Council for their support by providing funds to help print a travel brochure. He stated that they received a quote for printing 1,000 travel brochures but with the help of Almighty God, they were able to print 10,000 brochures.

Rev. China concluded his presentation by presenting each council member with a brochure and a handshake of thanks for their support.

5. Board Appointment

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to appoint Mr. Nizar Awde to the Clarendon County Tax Accommodations Commission to serve a four-year term.

6. Public Hearing – Ordinance 2019-01

Chairman Stewart stated that the public hearing for Ordinance 2019-01 - An Ordinance of the County Council of Clarendon County South Carolina to Amend the County's Official Zoning Map Designation for Tax Map Parcel #185-00-03-003-00; From Performance Zone (PZ) to Agriculture II (AGII) and Providing an Effective Date was now open.

The Public Hearing opened at 6:10 pm.

Ms. Maria Rose, Planning Director, began by stating that there is a map that shows the placement of the solar farm. She stated that the planning commission reviewed the information and recommends that Council approve the location for the solar farm

Mr. Sean Anderson, Pine Gate Renewable, stated that this is the first South Carolina project for Pine Gate Renewable. He continued by stating that Pine Gate Renewable has an agreement with Duke Energy Progress and this solar farm should be on line by the end of the year.

- Mr. William Harvin stated that he lives in the area and he asked how he could get his property evaluated for a solar farm.
- Mr. Anderson replied by stating that he will leave his information and Mr. Harvin can give him a call.
- Attorney Weston Adams, III, Nelson and Mullins, asked if it was ok with Administrator Epperson that the packet that was handed out to Council be a part of the official minutes for this meeting.
- Administrator Epperson replied by stating that this was fine.

Chairman Stewart asked if there were any other comments, hearing none, he stated that the public hearing would close. The public hearing closed at 6:17 pm.

7. Ordinance 2019-01

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Second Reading of Ordinance 2019-01, An Ordinance of the County Council of Clarendon County South Carolina to Amend the County's Official Zoning Map Designation for Tax Map Parcel #185-00-03-003-00; From Performance Zone (PZ) to Agriculture II (AGII) and Providing an Effective Date.

8. Presentation – Watercraft Bill

Ms. Patricia Pringle, Clarendon County Auditor, began her presentation by stating that Act 223 (H.4715) passed unanimously through South Carolina Statehouse in May 2018 with an effective date of January 1, 2020. She stated that this Act would adjust registrations on boats, motors, and watercrafts from every three years to an annual renewal. Ms. Pringle continued by stating that this Act would change boats taxes from being billed in arrears to being billed in advance.

Ms. Pringle stated that the new Act would reduce the amount of taxes that are delinquent. She stated that taxpayers would be paying property taxes and a \$10 renewal fee. Ms. Pringle stated that one proposal is to mimic the process for billing motor vehicles. Therefore, a boat whose registration expired in March 2020 would be billed

in February 2020 for taxes that are due in March 2020. She concluded by stating that any newly acquired boat would be billed at the end of their 120-day grace period following the purchase and no bills would be issued in 2019 unless the registration sticker expires in 2020 which would create a loss in revenue for the county.

9. Presentation of Proposed FY2019-2020 Budget

Mr. Anthony, Chief Financial Officer, began his presentation by thanking the staff of the Finance department, departmental managers, and elected officials that have participated in the budget process thus far.

He stated that budgeting is an ongoing and dynamic process that is typically broken down into clear phases:

- County Council, other elected officials and administration estimate available resources, perform an assessment of needs and then set priorities;
- These priorities are then reflected in a budget through an allocation of resources;
- Council, through these deliberations and in communication with our citizens, approve a budget;
- Elected officials and administration then implement these priorities through service delivery and project development; and,
- We monitor our on-going results for any changes or modifications, if needed.

Mr. Anthony continued by stating that the General Assembly has capped the amount of increase allowed in millage rates at the local level. The budget that we are submitting for First Reading contains the State allowed millage increase of 2.44% for County operations. [162.4 mils]

- We have built into our budget model a millage increase of 2.44% for General County operations. This amounts to a little more than \$96,000 in new ad valorem revenue after we factor in a slowing of growth in taxable assessed values within the county from our expectations a year ago. We have seen our tax collections come in less than budgeted thus far this year and have factored this into next year's budget. In the proposed budget we have included growth factor of 1.0% for Real Property and no growth in Vehicles.
- We are recommending no change in the Local Option Sales Tax credit of \$2,600,000 to our taxpayers.
- The General Assembly is discussing increases to the Local Government Fund (the House version at about \$11.5 million in new funds and somewhat less in the Senate version at \$9 million). However, this funding is distributed primarily to Counties as a percentage of population. Unfortunately, we are projecting "only" \$30,000 in new funds over the current year's budget.
- We are increasing our revenue from the Landfill as a result of your recent tipping fee increases for used tires; we are reducing our anticipated revenue associated with fees and fines, generally from Magistrates court.
- We are anticipating revenues of \$21,545,986 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 for General Fund operations, an increase of \$257,447 or 1.2% over the current fiscal year budget.
- The expenditures portion of the budget includes a couple of items that I would like to highlight. First, we have included in first reading a 2% COLA for all employees. We have also included a state mandated increase in employer retirement expense of 1%; needed to support the State's retirement system. DHEC has required that we begin mandated modifications at our Class II landfill and we are planning improvements to our IT systems operating platforms. We have received appropriation request increases from Behavioral Services of \$5,000, Santee Wateree RTA of \$7,000, the Third Circuit Solicitor's office of \$140,000; and, a \$54,000 increase from the Santee-Lynches Council of Government. We are still in discussions with McLeod Health Clarendon in determining taxpayer support for the provision of EMS service within the County.
- Total General Fund operational expenditures at this point total \$22,193,210; an increase of 4.5% over the current year's budget. This figure results in a deficit of (\$647,224), about the same as last year's deficit at first reading.
- With regards to the Fire service; we are requesting an increase of 4.0 mills. The majority of this increased funding is to create three (3) new Battalion Chief positions within the command structure of the department. In addition, we are requesting to draw down on available Fund Balance in an amount of about \$237,000 for the completion of construction work associated with the new Wyboo sub-station.
- We would also like to include in the First Reading our request that a \$2,000,000 Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) be approved in the event it becomes necessary.

- Included again this year is our request to borrow an amount not to exceed \$250,000 in the form of a five-year Capital lease for the purchase and equipping of new public safety vehicles and specialized equipment to be used at the Landfill and within Public Works.
- We are proposing a rate increase at this time within the Water & Sewer system. Continued system expansion is being funded through state and federal grants, long-term financing and internally generated cash. We are anticipating operating revenue of \$28,000 after debt service and transfers.
- For the fiscal year starting in July, we continue to evaluate operational expectations for the Weldon Auditorium and have prepared for this reading a budget that contains both a transfer from the Hospitality Fund of \$50,000 for operations and a \$37,000 transfer from the General Fund.

Mr. Anthony Concluded his presentation by stating that as of first reading, we have a preliminary General Fund budget that is out of balance by \$647,224.

1. **Mr. Gregory Holliday**, Chairman of Clarendon County Voters Registration and Election Board, began his presentation by stating that the Voters' Registration budget goes up each year depending on the number of elections that are held. He stated that the Voters' Registration and Election Board is requesting to raise the salary of the Voter's Registration Director and to add one part-time employee.

Mr. Holiday concluded his presentation by stating that line items that are reimbursed by the State Election Commission should not be included in the Voters Registration and Election Budget.

- Councilman English asked if the Board was asking for \$53,000 increase in salary for the Voters Registration Election Director.
 - Ms. Shirley Black-Oliver, Voters Registration Director, replied by stating that her salary was not adjusted when the two boards were combined and the \$53,000 is what the total salary for that position should be.
2. **Patricia Pringle**, Auditor, began her presentation by thanking Council for what they have done. She stated that there is a 17% decrease in the Auditor's budget for this fiscal year. Ms. Pringle concluded her presentation by requesting a title change from Administrative Assistant to Administrative Coordinator with an increase in Salary of \$2,432.
 3. **Beulah Roberts**, Clerk of Court, began her presentation by stating that the Clerk of Court budget has been the same for the past 6 or 7 years. She stated the Family Court is going live with the new Child Support Reporting system on June 3, 2019 and all child support payments will be processed out of Columbia. Mrs. Roberts continued by stating that Clarendon County was chosen as the Pilot County for E-Filing. She concluded her presentation by stating that the Clerk of Court from Clarendon County would be the deciding factor for the new case management program for the State of South Carolina.
 4. **Charles "Bucky" Mock**, Coroner, began by stating that the bottom line of the Coroner's budget would remain the same. He stated that he wants to move \$12,500 from Medical Examination to other places on the budget to better serve the citizens of Clarendon County.
 5. **Judge Nannette Frye**, Magistrate, stated that the Magistrate's Office would be upgrading their system to E-File their documents therefore, using less papers.
 6. **Sheriff's Tim Baxley**, began his presentation by stating that he is requesting an increase in the following:

a) Contractual Service	\$5,000	d) Radios and Equipment	\$12,000
b) Fuel Budget	\$5,000	e) Victims Advocate Services	\$10,000
c) Uniform	\$4,500	f) Membership and Dues	\$ 750

Sheriff Baxley continued by stating that he is requesting two more school resource officers to make a total of 12 School Resource Officers. He concluded his presentation by stating that the Sheriff's Department is requesting at least 3 to 4 new vehicles.

7. **Matt Evans**, Treasurer, stated that the Treasurer and Tax Collection Office have gone through all of the growing pains. He stated that the Treasurer's Office is working with the American Financial Services Collection Agency on delinquent taxes. Mr. Evans stated that out of 1,140 records, 358 have been paid since the Treasurer Office started working with the American Financial Services Collection Agency.

Chairman Stewart thanked everyone for all that they do.

10. Ordinance 2019-02

On motion by Vice Chairman Frierson and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the First Reading of Ordinance #2019-02, an Ordinance to Provide for a Levy of Taxes for County Purposes of Clarendon County, SC., for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2019, and Ending June 30, 2020, to Direct the Expenditures of Said Taxes and Other Funds for Clarendon County, and to Provide for other Matters related thereto Including the Administrative Accountability Procedures to be Followed During Implementation of the Budget (Operating and Capital) for Clarendon County for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2019 and Ending June 30, 2020.

11. Ordinance 2019-03

Administrator Epperson presented Council with Ordinance 2019-03, An Ordinance to Amend Clarendon County Ordinance No. 2010-09 (Previously Amended by Ordinance 2014-02). He stated that this Ordinance would increase the rates for Water and Sewer Services. Administrator Epperson stated that a meter that is ¾" in size with unmetered usage would increase to \$34.50 a month for the first 2000 gallons and \$6.25 per 1,000 gallons thereafter.

Administrator Epperson concluded his presentation by stating that a meter with metered usage monthly rate for the first 2000 gallons will be \$25.75 and \$6.25 per 1,000 gallons thereafter. He stated that the owner's repair agreement fees would be \$8.34 monthly or \$100 per year.

- Chairman Stewart asked when would this be implemented.
- Administrator Epperson replied by stating that implementation will be effective July 1, 2019 and adjusted In January thereafter.
- Councilman English asked how is this amount compared to other Entities.
- Administrator Epperson replied by stating that it is comparable to other municipalities.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Councilman Blakely, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the First Reading of Ordinance 2019-03, An Ordinance to Amend Clarendon County Ordinance No. 2010-09 (Previously Amended by Ordinance 2014-02).

12. Financial Report

Mr. Lynden Anthony, CFO, began his report by stating the following:

- **The General Fund** had Expenditures of \$1,872,654 and Revenue figures were not available as of March 31, 2019.
- **Water and Sewer Department** figures were not available as of meeting time. However, will have it sent to Council as soon as it becomes available.
- **Weldon Auditorium** had Revenue of \$16,373 for the month ending March 31, 2019 and total Expenses were \$86,252. He stated that the Weldon Auditorium ended the month of March 2019 after transfers with a deficit of \$19,879.
- **The C-Fund Program** for the month of March 2019 had a Cash Balance of \$2,280,367 of which \$1,006,848 has been committed to remaining local paving projects, State Construction Projects in Progress and State Proviso Funds. He stated that the C-Fund Program had an Uncommitted Balance of \$1,273,519 as of the end of March 2019.

13. Administrator's Report

Administrator Epperson began his report by giving Council an update on the following projects:

- **USDA Phase II** – project continues to progress. Lines are being brought on in sections and new customers are signing up.
- **Clarendon County Water/Sewer Phase 3A/B** Line installation has begun as well as the digging of the test well.
- **County County Fire Department-Construction**. Has begun, with the footings being dug. Anticipated construction time is 7 months.
- **Road Paving**
 1. 75% C-Funds (County Portion) – Work on Winwood Drive has been completed except for punch list items. Work on Bethlehem Road is slated to begin very soon once a couple of right of way obstruction issues are addressed.
 2. 25% C-Funds (State Portion) – George Harvin Road and Ram Bay Road projects have been completed except for punch list items.
- **Offices Closed**

County offices will be closed on Friday, April 19th in observance of Good Friday.
- **Events**

The following events will be held during the month of April in Clarendon County.

 1. April 11-13 Puddin Swamp Festival, Turbeville
 2. April 12-13 Bird Fest, Panola
 3. April 26-27 Stripped Bass Festival, Manning

14. Chairman's Report

Chairman Stewart began his report by stating that he attended the Methodist Men's Luncheon today and he would be attending the Manning Rotary Meeting on April 17th.

15. Executive Session – Personnel Matters – Assessor's Office and Public Works Department

Chairman Stewart asked for a motion to go into Executive Session for two Personnel Matters within the Assessor's Office and Public Works Department.

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Councilman English, Council voted Unanimous Approval to go into Executive Session for two Personnel Matters within the Assessor's Office and Public Works Department.

The Executive Session began at 7:54 pm.

16. Open Session

Chairman Stewart asked for a motion to come out of Executive Session and back into Open Session.

On Motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to come out of Executive session and back into Open Session. The Executive Session ended at 9:10 pm.

Chairman Stewart stated that in Executive Session, they discussed two Personnel Matters within the Assessor's Office and Public Works Department and no action would be taken on these matters.

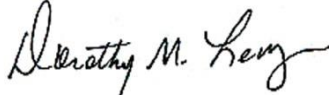
17. Adjournment

Chairman Stewart stated that we have exhausted our agenda and he asked for a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting.

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to adjourn the Council Meeting.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dorothy M. Levy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Dorothy M. Levy
Clerk to Clarendon County Council, CCC

